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Sublime Porte Sponsorship of Javanese Muslim Students in Ottoman Lands (1895-1913 A D): The Ottoman Archive Documents as a Source

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the sublime Porte of Javanese Muslims in Ottoman lands during 1849-1915 AD with the Ottoman Empire, during 1849-1916 AD, which focusing on a side of the Ottoman Javanese relationship that was neglected in Western history. So, the study is extrapolating this relationship in an episode of conflict between them on the one side, and the Western countries on the other side, depending on the documents of the Ottoman archives in Istanbul, and analyzing them using the historical research approach, and it contributes to recognizing the Javanese Muslims, and the troubles they tolerated to preserve their Islam and gain their independence, and educating their children. The results of this qualitative study indicate that: despite the weakness it was, and its many problems, which hindered it from carrying out its duty, which was hoped for as a caliphate for the Muslims, in confront of the colonial attacks on the lands of Java, it made great efforts to help the students of Javanese Muslims, and this study recommends increasing International studies and conferences on the history of Javanese Muslims throughout the ages, based on Ottoman and local sources, to confront the fallacies issued by Western sources.

Keywords: Javanese Muslim students, the Ottoman Empire, the Sublime Porte, the Sultanate Schools.

Islam changed the features of political and cultural life in Malay and when Islamic states were established in the land of the archipelago, all areas of life flourished. The Holy Quran, the Sunnah of the Prophet and general Islamic thought became the system that prevailed in the country. The numbers of students wishing to learn the Islamic religion, the sciences of the Arabic language, and

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Islamic law increased. There were even scholars from the people of the archipelago who went to Arab countries and learned Arabic. Then they returned to their homelands, carrying with them many well-known religious books. They devoted themselves to translating them, commenting on them and adding to some of their parts. Islamic countries began to support each other politically, economically, socially, culturally and intellectually. Their situation continued in this manner until the Western Crusader colonizer came, hating Islam and Muslims. The situation began to change for the worse as a result of hostile colonial policies (Jurays 2014: 410-411).

This article was intended to learn about the Sublime Porte's sponsorship of Javanese Muslim students in the Ottoman lands, during the period extending between: 1895-1913 AD. This sheds light on an aspect of Ottoman-Javanese relations. The study of which has been intentionally neglected in Western history. Therefore, this study aimed to fill this gap by extrapolating the relationship between the two entities during the period of study, in which was full of events that formed an episode of conflict between the Ottoman Empire and the country of Java on the one hand and the Western countries on the other hand, which had multiple pretexts to extend their influence over the regions of Southeast Asia, eliminate their Muslims and weaken and ignore them.

This research aims to present scientific conclusions based on historical facts about the goals - mentioned above - extracted from contemporary historical sources for the time period of study and deposited in the Ottoman archives of the Presidency of the Turkish Republic in Istanbul, according to the following axes:

1. A historical introduction to the relationship of Javanese Muslims with the Ottoman Empire.
2. Sublime Porte aid to Javanese Muslim students in Ottoman lands.

The nature of the topic indicated that the research relies on the descriptive historical approach, by collecting the scientific material contained in the aforementioned archive documents about the country of Java during the research period. Then classifying this material according to the research axes, taking into account the historical order as much as possible and the objective presentation to draw the broad outlines of the topic and come up with some results. The study concluded by presenting the most important recommendations that it reached in this brief overview.

A Historical Introduction to the Relationship of Javanese Muslims with the Ottoman Empire

The island of Java belongs to what is known as: the "Malay World". It is archipelago consisting of thousands of islands spread across Southeast Asia, which was once called: the East Indies and is currently divided into large political units. The most important of them are: Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines and among the greatest of these islands are: Java, Sumatra and Borneo. All of these are located in Indonesia, in addition to large and small islands. In total, it amounts to: four thousand islands (4000), its total area: seven hundred and thirty-five thousand square miles (735,000), including: the Malay Peninsula, extending south of Siam, which is surrounded by some islands. Some of them have important global ports, as ports: "Penang" and "Singapore". Malay is separated from Sumatra by Bugaz: a strait, called: Bugaz "Malaka". Malay is formed with the small islands around it and part of the western coast of the island of Borneo: currently Malaysia and among the large islands in archipelago: Algeria: "Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao and Sulu Archipelago" in the Philippines ('Abd al-Ḥamīd 1965: 84).

It is worth noting: what Snoek Horgronje stated that the term: "Java", or "the country of Java", became widespread among the Arabs to refer to: the region of Southeast Asia or all the peoples who belong to the Malay dynasty in its broadest forms, including the country extending from Siam (Thailand) to Malacca and New Guinea (Hürkhrūnyah 1998: 541-542).

Many historians have agreed that the beginning of the introduction of Islam into Southeast Asia was during the era of the Prophet Mohamed, peace and blessings of God be upon him, in the

first century AH (seventh century AD). The spread initially began on a limited scale. It was limited to the coastal areas, then gradually spread until it spread to most areas of the archipelago (al-Ya'qūbi 2014: 25).

Looking at the history of Javanese Muslims, it becomes clear how many challenges they faced, either on the internal level, which was manifested in their abuse and persecution by the Hindu ruling authorities, in which led them to fight, to preserve their Islam and to be freed from the heresies and polytheistic superstitions that were implanted in them by their early politicians: the Hindus and Buddhists, as well as sincere worship to God alone, and abandoning the worship of other gods or on the external level to confront this colonialist Crusader penetration that aspired to control their country and eliminate Islam and the Muslims in it.

Some sources mention the emergence of some strong relations and communications between the Muslim Javanese sultans and the sultans of the Ottoman Empire; One of the Ottoman documents stated: "The island of Sumatra was conquered during the time of Sultan Selim I, with the arrival of the Ottoman Victory Brigade to the far reaches of the Arabian Peninsula. When the victories were directed to the island of Sumatra, the people of Aceh offered subordination to the Great Caliphate by appointing envoys from among them at the headquarters of the Ottoman Sultanate. They placed the Ottoman flag on all ships and ports, with the necessary subordination to Sinan Pasha, the naval superintendent. They asked for the protection of the aforementioned person in exchange for this and the aforementioned Sultan responded to the people's request. According to the Royal Decree, Minister Sinan Pasha presented some cannons and swords to the Sultan of Aceh, in recognition of the subordination and these are there to-day" (BOA, I.HR 260 – 15586 1873).

Relations between the Ottomans and the Acehnese developed during the reign of the two sultans: the Ottoman: Suleiman the Magnificent (927-974 AH / 1520-1566 AD) and the Acehnese: Alaeddin Ri'aya Shah, nicknamed (Al-Qahar) (944-976 AH / 1537-1568 AD). Some argued that the courageous role that Sultan Al-Qahar played against the Portuguese was due to the support and influence he had from the Ottomans. The relations were clearly renewed between the state of Aceh during the reign of its sultan: Iskandar Muda I (1016-1046 AH / 1607-1636 AD) and the Ottoman Empire, which sent weapons, military experts to (Aceh) government, in order to join the Acehnese fleets in their fight against the Portuguese. Sultan Iskandar Muda sent the men of the Ottoman Empire gifts and products for which the country of the archipelago was famous, such as: pepper, spices, and the like (Jurays 2014: 372-377).

The British historian Andrew Charles Peacock mentioned the Ottoman presence in Malay literature in the seventeenth century several times. Many Malay rulers claimed descent from the Ottoman Sultan and that the prestige of the Ottoman cannon - and its associated founders - played a large role in the Malay world's admiration for everything Ottoman, this cultural influence continues being one of the ways that helped the Ottomans to exercise their influence in the region, as well as the trade ties that increased during that period. This is in addition to religious connections, a number of scholars coming from the Ottoman lands played a role in spreading Islam in the region, among them: Dawood Al-Rumi in Aceh. He was most likely a descendant of an Ottoman soldier, and confirmed this religious connection more clearly from the 17th century onwards. The numbers of Southeast Asian scholars who studied in the Ottoman Hijaz increased. They moved to Istanbul (Peacock 2018: 11).

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the star of the Ottoman Empire fell from the Javanese sky, even if its spiritual influence remains on the hearts of its Muslims, on the grounds that it is a caliphate state. This is evident in Peacock's argument that despite the absence of an effective Ottoman role in the Indian Ocean in the eighteenth century to a large extent, the Ottoman state continued to appear on the political scene as the leader of the nation through the activity of the Muslims of the region themselves (Peacock 2018: 11).

The Javanese Muslims' petitions and their repeated requests for the protection of the Ottoman Empire became one of the most important manifestations of Javanese-Ottoman relations during the nineteenth century in the face of the increasing colonial encroachment on Southeast Asia at a time when the Ottoman Empire was suffering from the weakness of its political position on the external level, because of its loss of territory, especially in Europe, in addition to its many

internal problems, This made it deal with Javanese petitions with extreme caution, for fear of provoking European countries.

Ottoman archive documents indicate: That the embassy sent by Sultan (Aceh): Mansour Shah to Istanbul in 1849 AD, led by Mohamed Ghouth, represents the beginning of the restoration of Ottoman contact with the lands of Java. The embassy carried the aforementioned ruler's desire to obtain Ottoman subordination, requested protection from it, permission to read speeches in the name of the Ottoman Sultan and sent an employee with an Ottoman decree, a vessel and an Ottoman flag to there (BOA, A.MKT.UM.25-72 1850). The motive for this was: confronting the Dutch expansion in Sumatra and seeking help from the Ottoman Caliphate, based on the previous relations between Aceh and the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth century and Aceh's previous declaration of Ottoman sovereignty (BOA, i.DH.407-26941 1858). The Ottoman response was nothing more than "to comfort the Javanese" and disbursing royal gifts to its members for the expenses of their stay in Istanbul, as a travel allowance for them (BOA, A.MKT.NZD.47-66 1851; A.MKT.MHM 134-32 1858).

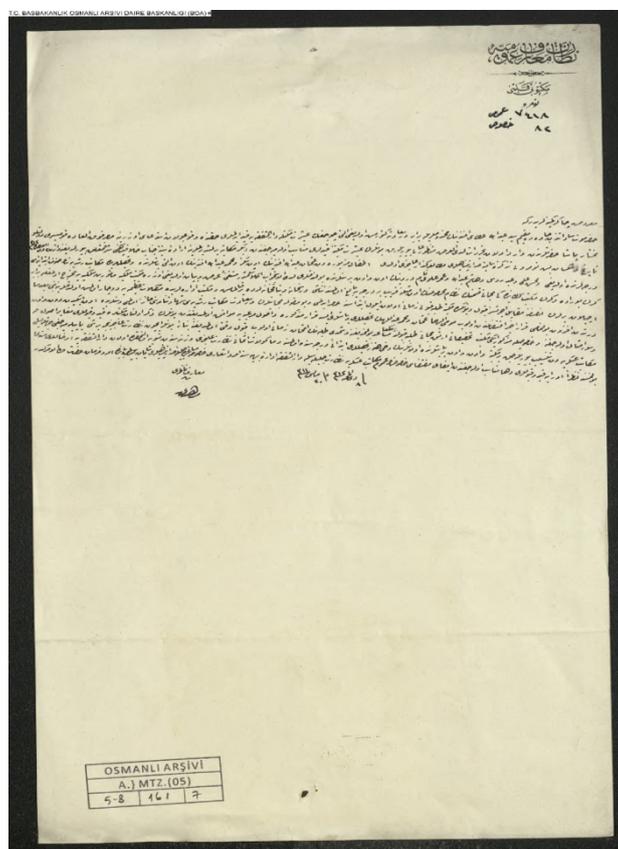
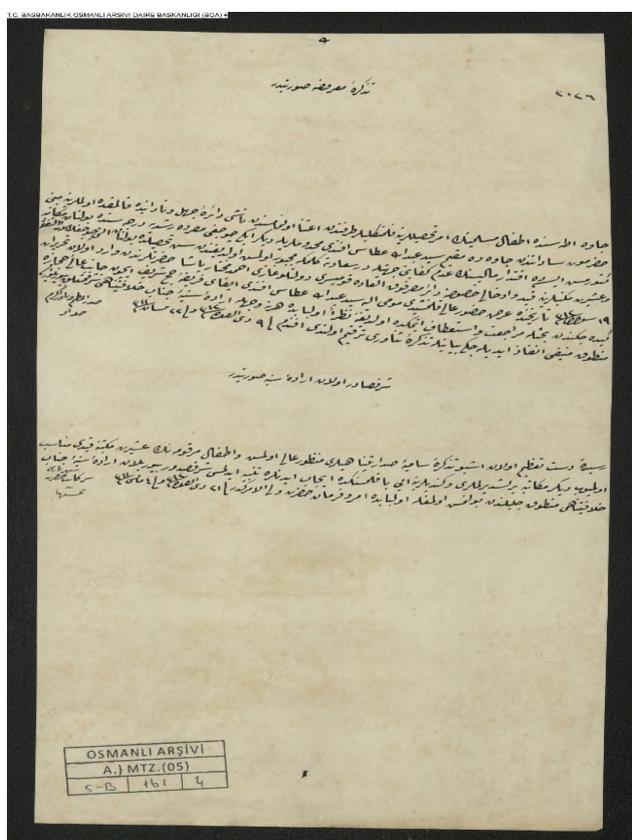


Figure 1. Sublime Porte correspondence regarding the admission of some Batavian Muslim children to the Sultanate Schools

Source: Ottoman Archives, classification 1166 – 87419, 1898.

The embassies of Aceh to the Ottoman lands were renewed before the outbreak of war between the Sultanate of Aceh and the Netherlands in 1873 AD (BOA, A.MKT.MHM 457-55/21 1872), The embassies of Aceh continued to request Ottoman assistance throughout the Dutch war on Aceh (1873-1904 AD), until the Netherlands was able to occupy the Sultanate of Aceh, without

substantial assistance from the Ottoman Empire and this is any indication. It indicates the weakness of the Ottoman Empire during this period and the wavering of its political weight.

Sublime Porte Aid for Javanese Muslim Students

Although the documents reflect the passivity of the Ottoman Empire in confronting the colonialists' encroachments, their oppression of Javanese Muslims, and averting danger from them. It also reflects a clear interest on the part of the Sublime Porte to provide various assistance to the Javanese Muslims. In line with the policy of Sultan Abdelhamid II (1876-1909 AD), who took several steps aimed at gathering Muslims under the banner of the Ottoman Empire and strengthening their activity under the umbrella of Islamic unity in confronting the Western countries, which were waiting for opportunities to control the properties of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman trend focused on highlighting the caliphate and its leadership of the entire Islamic nation and therefore we find the Sublime Porte tending to appoint consuls in: Batavia, Singapore, Bombay and Colombo to reconnect the Muslims of these regions with the Caliphate, encourage mosques to recognize Ottoman subordination, and pray for the Ottoman Sultan in the Friday sermon.

Among the aspects of the Sublime Porte's interest in the Javanese Muslims was the admission of their children to Ottoman schools and the provision of aid to them. Many documents were found that confirm this trend, including, for example, what reflects the Sublime Porte's response to requests for their children to enroll in these schools, for example: education authority writing to the grand vizier regarding the request submitted to register the children of Sayed Abdallah Attas Effendi, from Java and the orphans under his guardianship, who were not financially able to help him concerning their education expenses. The response was received from grand vizier to the education authority and the administration of Dar Al-Shafqa by enrolling four children in the Civil and Sultanate School, and the last two in Dar al-Shafqa, based on the Sultan's order, the education authority demanded that officials be advised to take good care of the aforementioned children (BOA, A.MTZ.(05) 5.B - 161-1:7 1895).

In addition, the statement of grand vizier to the Foreign Affairs Directorate regarding the notification from the education authority, in which three of the four Batavia Muslim children who traveled to Istanbul were enrolled in the Sultanate Schools and one boy in the Royal School, free of charge. It also referred to the Batavia consulate's testimony about the correspondence of some Muslim notables from Singapore and Java and the princes of the islands of Sumatra, Malaka, and Rio, to demand that their children and grandchildren receive a share of this and that the aforementioned consulate should be inquired about the number of boys whom the notables of Singapore and Java asked the Muslims to send to the aforementioned schools. (BOA, BEO 1166 - 87419 1898).

File No. (1316) contained a letter from grand vizier to the head of the Sultan's clerk regarding the offer of a petition from Sheikh Bagand, the head of the Arab community in the city of Bogor in Java and Abu Bakr Sunkar to enroll and accept their seven children in the Sultan's schools to learn sciences and arts, as well as the memorandum of the Foreign Affairs Directors regarding the procedure required for this, in addition to the two letters received from the Consul of Batavia regarding sending the aforementioned petition, requesting their registration and acceptance in the aforementioned schools upon their arrival in Istanbul, where they boarded the vessel from Java and requested the issuance of the Sultan's order in this regard and a notification from the head of the Sultan's clerk to the grand vizier regarding the issuance of the Sultan's order to take action in accordance with the grand vizier's memorandum. (BOA, BEO 1261 - 94534 1899).

Not only did the Sublime Porte accept the requests of the Javanese Muslims to enroll their children in Ottoman schools, but the Sublime Porte continued to pay attention to the students' social conditions. This is evident from the request of the head of the Sultanate Military Schools and the field marshal of the Artillery House from the general education authority, who disbursed an amount of two thousand piasters as travel allowance to Ahmed Masri Effendi Al-Jawi, one of

the students of the clan school, for the purpose of returning him to his country due to the severity of his father's illness, who had become very old, since the aforementioned does not have the money necessary for this. He stated that he could return to his country with the help of the Dutch embassy and since the authorities would not agree to return him through a foreign embassy, because he is one of those who were brought to the aforementioned school by order of the Sultan, the aforementioned amount must be settled quickly (BOA, MF.MKT 604 - 5 1901).

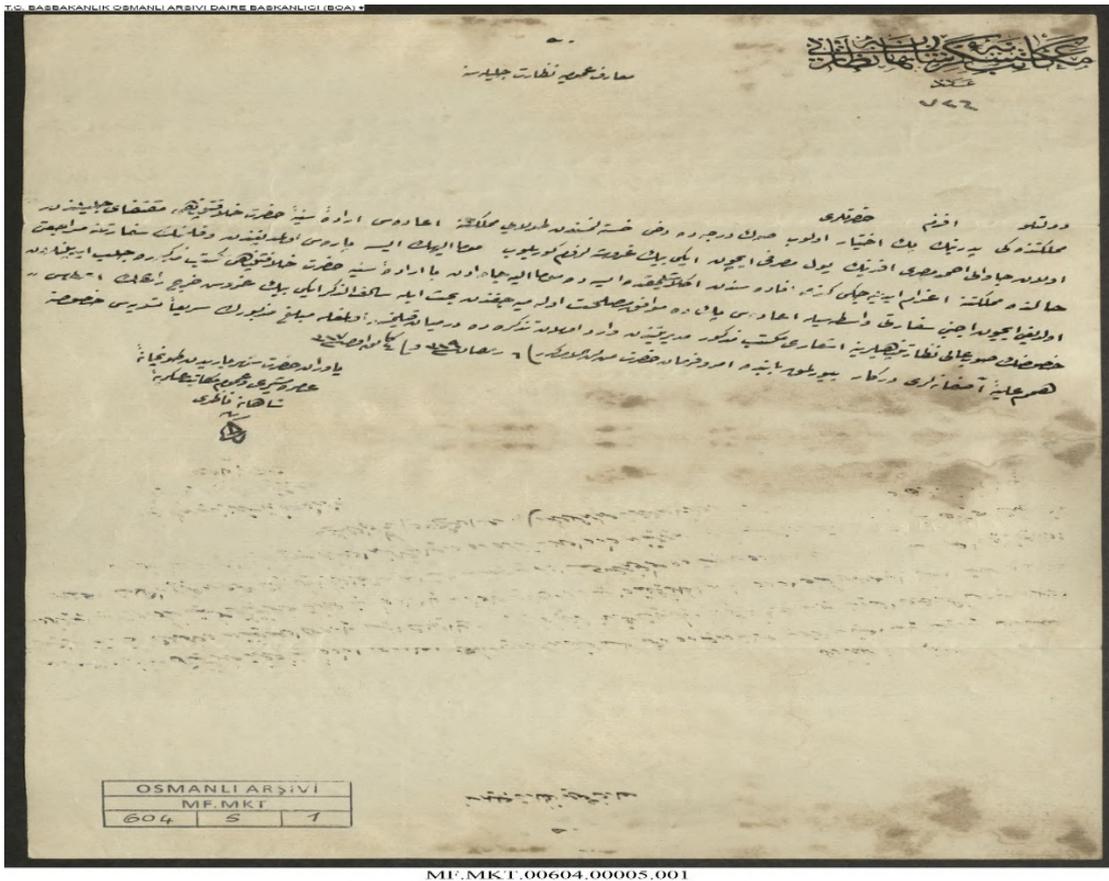


Figure 2. Sublime Porte correspondence regarding the disbursement of an amount as travel allowance to one of the Javanese Muslim students in the Sultanate Schools

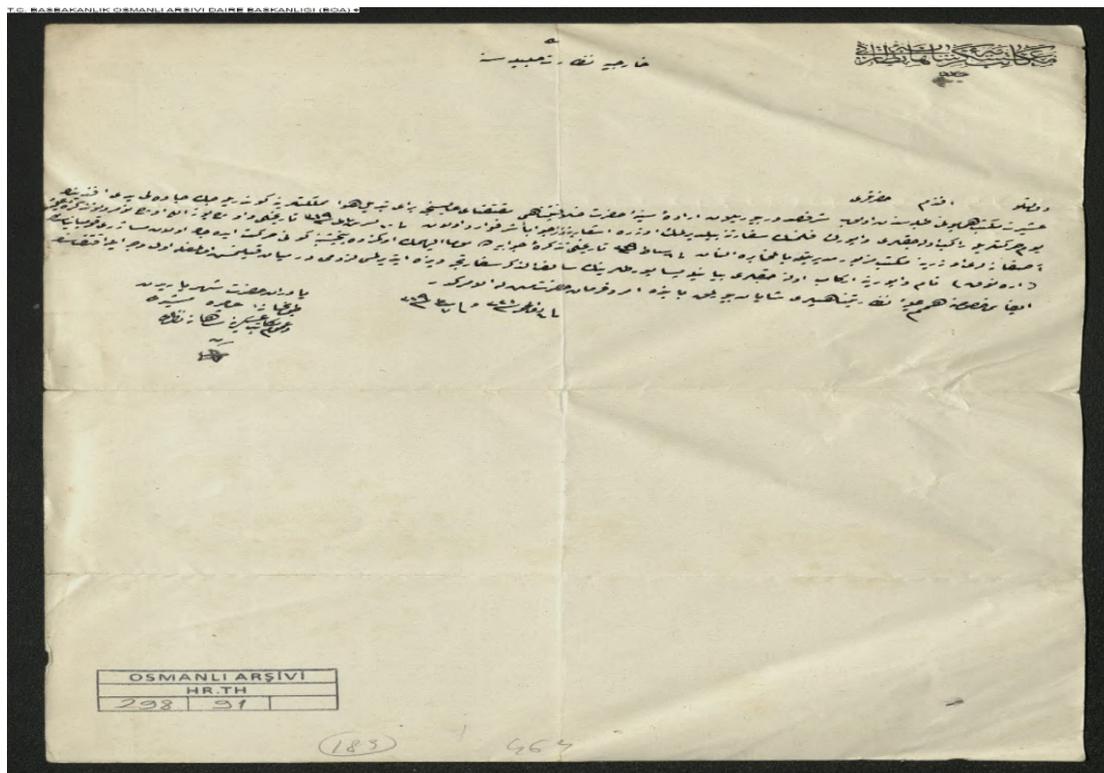
Source: Ottoman Archives, classification MF.MKT 604 - 5, 1901.

The letter received from Mohamed Kamil Bey, the current Consul of Corono and the former Consul of Batavia, was submitted to the Foreign Affairs Directors, in which it proposed transfer the Muslim children of Java who were brought to Istanbul, to obtain education at the Sultanate School and to allocate a salary of eighty piasters to each of them (BOA, BEO 2174-162984 1903).

The grand vizier also directed the finance authority to inform the education authority, by paying the costs of returning Ali Bin Abdelrahman Bin Sahl Effendi, a resident of Java - who was accepted into the Sultanate School seven years ago - to his country, because he will not be able to complete his studies due to his poverty, based on his request, and the amount required to be spent is: three thousand piasters for the aforementioned (BOA, BEO 2700 - 202432 1905).

A document stated that when one of the Ottoman newspapers reported on the suffering of some Javanese children who were receiving education in various schools in Istanbul due to the difference in Istanbul's weather from their country's weather and some of them fell ill, the Sultan's order was issued to send the aforementioned children to places more compatible with the weather of their country and the Sublime Porte searched for the best places to send them to. Baghdad and Mecca in particular were nominated so that they would be out of sight of the Dutch Embassy (BOA, MF.MKT 604 - 5 1899).

The Sublime Porte also showed interest in ensuring the return of Javanese Muslim students to their countries, including: field marshal of the Artillery House and the superintendent of the Sultanate Military Schools asked the Foreign Affairs Directorate to issue a visa from the Dutch Embassy for the passports of seven Javanese students from the Sultanate Clan School, in order to travel to their country for recreation (BOA, HR.TH 298 - 91 1904).



HR.TH.00298.00091.001

Figure 3. Document regarding issuance of visa on passports of Javanese students

Source: Ottoman Archives, classification HR.TH 298 - 91, 1904.

The Sublime Porte granted some exceptions to Javanese Muslim students, not other students. This is evident from the statement of the director of the Sultanate School to the General Education Authority about the petition of Omar Al-Attas Effendi, the Javanese student who was registered and accepted in the Sultanate School by order of the Sultan ten years ago. He is in the sixth and final grade in the Turkish language and the fifth grade in the French language. He was satisfied with his fifth grade in French and is requesting admission to the Turkish language test this year. As he hopes to enroll in law school, study the systems and laws of the Ottoman Empire and return to his country to serve the interests of the Islamic Caliphate. The General Education Authority responded to the director of the Sultanate School by accepting the aforementioned student's petition on an exceptional basis, even though he had not completed the last grade in the French language, and that this exception would not apply to anyone else (BOA, MF.MKT. 935 - 52 1906)

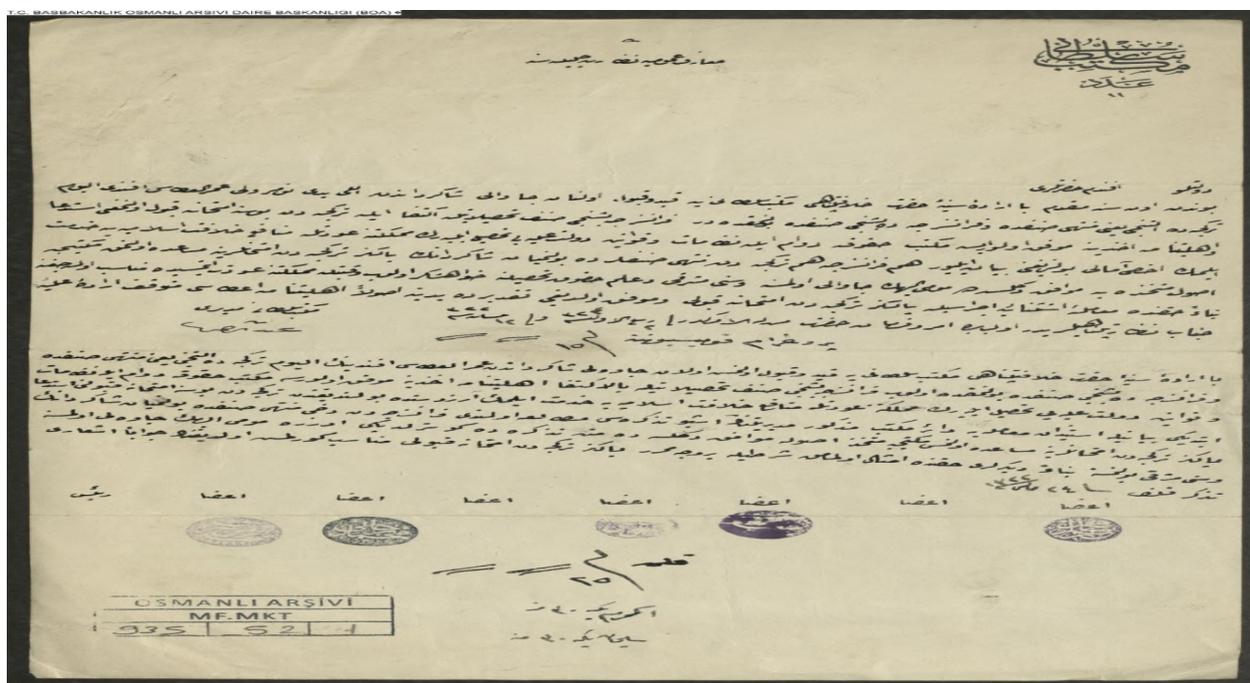


Figure 4. A document reflecting an exception for student Omar Al-Attas Al-Jawi at the Sultanate School

Source: Ottoman Archives, classification MF.MKT 935 – 52, 1906.

The Ottoman embassy in Batavia played a role in confronting the Dutch transgressions against Javanese Muslim students and providing them with assistance. This is evident from the letter of Ibrahim Rasim, Consul of Batavia, to the Foreign Office regarding the response to the report received from the Embassy of the Netherlands in Istanbul to the Foreign Office regarding the delivery of passports by the Consulate on the sixteenth of December 1905 AD to four students who are nationals of the State of the Netherlands and other strange statements in this regard (BOA, HR.TH 330 – 92 1906).

A letter was also received from the Batavia Consulate to the Foreign Ministry's officers denouncing the Dutch's intransigence towards the Javanese Muslims, their closing of schools, and reporting the opening of a school in the city of Chiangjur in Java, appointing an Arabic teacher to teach the Arabic language to Muslim boys. The school was closed after several days by the Dutch authorities (BOA, HR.ID 1373-55 1913).

Thus, it is inferred from the documents: that the Ottoman Empire tried to strengthen its moral influence and bind the various Muslim peoples to it under the umbrella of the Islamic Caliphate, to compensate for some of its declining position on the international political level. This was evident in its interest in the affairs of Muslims in general and the Javanese among them in particular, such as its interest in educating Javanese Muslim students in Ottoman schools and its interest in Javanese pilgrims (BOA, A.MKT. MVL 20-17-1849). The speed of responding to any complaint related to the interests of Javanese pilgrims by foreign embassies, the speed of recognizing it, and working to remove its causes (BOA, HR ID. 98-48, 1913). In addition, providing some assistance to Javanese Muslims, such as: financial support to the director of Al-Ittihad newspaper, which was founded by the Muslim people of Java and his companions in Egypt, to

secure religious benefits due to their lack of financial means (BOA, A.MTZ. (05) 30-123 1914) and providing the necessary assistance to the Muslims of Java, because of their poverty and need following a flood in Java and the losses resulting from it (BOA, BEO 4402 - 330150 1916), in addition to its interest on more than one occasion in sending the Holy Quran and distributing it to the Javanese Muslims (BOA, I.HR 321 - 20729 1890; i.HR 290 - 18200 1883).

It goes without saying: The Ottoman Empire was subjected to several tremors, which ultimately led to its fall and the loss of the Caliphate, which was considered one of the greatest gains of Muslims in general. Sultan Abdelhamid II (1876-1909 AD) took several steps aimed at gathering Muslims under the banner of the Ottoman Empire and strengthening their activity under the umbrella of Islamic unity in confronting Western countries, which were waiting for opportunities to control the properties of the Ottoman Empire, but fate did not give Sultan Abdelhamid the time to carry out what he was hoping for, where the Federalists gathered against him. They sparked a revolution of Young Turks Group against him and deposed him from the throne on 24 Apr. 1909 AD. The deposition of Sultan Abdelhamid II, the federalists' control of power and their unjust policies contributed to the weakening of the state and its inability to rescue the Javanese Muslims from the aggressions and injustice of the colonialists and for it to fulfill the role expected of it as a caliphate for the Muslims and to throw the state into the First World War (1914-1918 AD), which The Ottoman Empire did not exist after that.

As per the foregoing, the results of the research: "Sublime Porte Sponsorship of Javanese Muslim Students in Ottoman Lands" as follows:

The Ottoman Empire - even if it showed negativity in confronting the colonialists' encroachments and their oppression of the Javanese Muslims and averting danger from them, there has been a clear interest from the Sublime Porte in providing various assistance to the Javanese Muslims, including: caring for their children in Ottoman schools and many documents have been found that confirm this trend, including, for example: what reflects the Sublime Porte's response to requests of their children to enroll in these schools and interest in the students' social conditions and ensuring their return to their country, as well as granting the Sublime Porte some exceptions to Javanese Muslim students without other students, if this indicates anything; It indicates that the Ottoman Empire tried to support its moral influence, in addition to linking the various Muslim peoples under the umbrella of the Islamic Caliphate, to compensate for its declining position on the international political level.

The researcher recommends more international studies and conferences on the history of Javanese Muslims during different time periods, to correct the wrong impressions contained in Western sources and some traveler books about our Islamic history. It also calls on the researcher to benefit from the size and number of documents in the Ottoman archives about the Islamic world in general and the Malay world in particular.

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